

PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO VALIDATE THE GENERIC NAME "MELLITA" AS FROM AGASSIZ, 1841 (CLASS ECHINOIDEA) FOR USE IN ITS ACCUSTOMED SENSE

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(Commission's reference Z.N.(S.)677)

The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its plenary powers to validate as from Agassiz, 1841, the generic name *Mellita* (Class Echinoidea) for use in its accustomed sense, i.e. with *Echinodiscus quinquesperforatus* Leske, 1778, as type species. A decision on the present case is urgently required in connection with the preparation of the forthcoming *Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology* and it is hoped therefore that the Commission will give this application all practicable priority.

2. The generic name *Mellita* is now universally employed for the genus typified by *Echinodiscus quinquesperforatus* Leske, 1778 (*Addit. Klein. Nat. Disp. Ech.* : 197) (the species to which is applicable also the pre-Linnean name *Mellita testudinata* Klein). This generic name was first used in this sense by a binominal author after 1757 by Agassiz in 1841 (*Mon. Echin.*, Sec. Mon. des Scutelles : 34), by whom it was credited to Klein. Five species, namely *quinquefora* Agassiz, *testudinata* Klein, *hexapora* Agassiz, *similis* Agassiz, and *lobata* Agassiz were listed and described by Agassiz under this generic name. No type species was designated or selected by Agassiz.

3. In 1884, Pomel (*Class. méth. gen. Echin. viv. et foss.* : 71) specified *Mellita testudinata* Klein as the type species of the genus *Mellita* Klein. *Mellita testudinata* Klein is a pre-Linnean name and thus unavailable, except as validated by Agassiz in 1841. The oldest available name for this species is *Echinodiscus quinquesperforatus* Leske, 1778, which is based upon a reference to Klein's figures of his *testudinata*). All authors since Pomel's time have used the generic name *Mellita* in this sense, crediting it either to Klein or Agassiz, either *Echinodiscus quinquesperforatus* Leske or *Mellita testudinata* Klein being cited as the type species.

4. However, in 1823, O. Fabricius (*Fortenegelse over afg. Biskop Fabriciusses efterladte naturalier* : 110) had used the generic name *Mellita* to include five species (*biforis*, *hexaporus*, *aurita*, *laganum*, *decadactylus*), none of which was listed under this name by Agassiz in 1841, except the species *hexaporus*, which has since (1851) been removed from the genus *Mellita* Agassiz and made the type species of *Leodia* Gray, [1852]. Thus none of the species listed by Fabricius can be used to secure the use of the name *Mellita* Fabricius in the same sense as that in which the name *Mellita* Agassiz (=the pre-Linnean *Mellita* Klein) has been used.

5. If the name *Mellita* Fabricius were to be accepted, all the species currently referred to *Mellita* Agassiz would have to be referred to some other genus, and the name *Mellita* Fabricius would replace one of the well established names now used for the genera to which the five species cited by Fabricius are referred. Thus, extreme and needless confusion would arise from the use of the name *Mellita* Fabricius.

6. Accordingly, the proposal is hereby submitted that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should:—

(1) use its plenary powers:—

- (a) to suppress the name *Mellita* Fabricius, 1823, for the purposes both of the Laws of Priority and Homonymy;
- (b) to validate the name *Mellita* as from Agassiz, 1841, with *Echinodiscus quinquesperforatus* Leske, 1778, as type species;
- (2) place the generic name *Mellita* Agassiz, 1841 (gender of generic name: feminine), as proposed, under (1)(b) above, to be validated under the plenary powers (type species, as proposed under (1)(b) above, to be designated under the plenary powers: *Echinodiscus quinquesperforatus*), on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology*;
- (3) place the name *Mellita* Fabricius, 1823, as proposed, under (1)(a) above, to be suppressed under the plenary powers, on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology*;
- (4) place the trivial name *quinquesperforatus* Leske, 1778 (as published in the combination *Echinodiscus quinquesperforatus*) (trivial name of type species of *Mellita* Agassiz, 1841) on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology*.

SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY DR. LAURENCE M. KLAUBER REGARDING THE TRIVIAL NAMES "ATROX" BAIRD & GIRARD, 1853 (AS PUBLISHED IN THE COMBINATION "CROTALUS ATROX") AND "POLYSTICTA" COPE, 1865 (AS PUBLISHED IN THE COMBINATION "CAUDISONA POLYSTICTA") RESPECTIVELY (CLASS REPTILIA, ORDER SQUAMATA)

By CHARLES M. BOGERT

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(Commission's references Z.N.(S.)523 and 524)

(Letter dated 6th May 1952)

I am writing to advise you that I am heartily in accord with Dr. L. M. Klauber's suggestion that the names *Crotalus atrox* Baird & Girard, 1853, and *Crotalus polystictus* (Cope, 1865) be placed on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology*, and that the names *Crotalus cinereus* Le Conte in Hallowell, 1852, and *Crotalus multimaculatus* Jan, 1853, be placed on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Trivial Names*.

It is eminently preferable to continue using the names *Crotalus atrox* and *Crotalus polystictus*, both of which have been long and widely used in preference to those that, in accordance with Dr. Klauber's recommendations, should be placed on the *Official Index* of rejected and invalid names,